

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 19, 2019

The Honorable Sonny Perdue
Secretary
U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Ave., S.W.
Washington, DC 20250

Dear Secretary Perdue,

We the Members of the Ohio Congressional delegation write to bring to your attention the destructive impact recent natural disasters have had on Ohioans and to request that recently approved disaster relief resources be used to assist Ohio farmers. Specifically, we ask that the Department increase the prevent planting payment rate to 90% for Midwestern farmers unable to plant because of flooding.

On June 6, 2019, President Trump signed into law supplemental appropriations for disaster relief, allowing prevent planting payment assistance for farmers who have incurred losses because of natural disasters. As you consider the eligibility criteria for the \$3,005,442,000 appropriated by Congress to assist farmers, we ask that you keep in mind the countless Ohio families and farmers that have been devastated by historic rainfall, flooding, and tornadoes over the last month. On June 18, President Trump issued a Presidential Disaster Declaration for 10 Ohio counties effected by these severe storms, and we hope that USDA will also make disaster assistance funds available to Ohioans as FEMA has already done.

Across the Midwest, heavy rainfall has caused floods that have prevented farmers from tilling and planting on their land. This will lead to considerable losses in production as the planting season closes. Ohio farms account for more than 14 million acres of land and a large portion of the country's source of corn, wheat, and soybeans. These farms face heavy losses and possible bankruptcy if nothing is done to assist them.

Last year, Ohio farmers planted 90% of their planned corn acreage by the end of May. By the same time this year, Ohio farmers have only planted 38% of their anticipated corn acreage. These devastatingly low averages demonstrate the dire impact of current conditions on Midwestern farmers. This is the most delayed planting start in over 40 years. The economic strain on farms across the Midwest will be overwhelming.

In addition to flooding, Ohioans have seen 36 tornadoes that created a path of destruction—leaving tens of thousands without power and destroying hundreds of homes. These natural disasters have left Ohio farmers with few options. With severe weather crippling Ohio farms, families and communities, we strongly encourage you to use disaster aid to assist Ohio farmers.

Sincerely,



Warren Davidson
Member of Congress



Bob Gibbs
Member of Congress

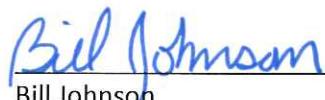
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Marcy Kaptur
Member of Congress



Michael R. Turner
Member of Congress



Bill Johnson
Member of Congress



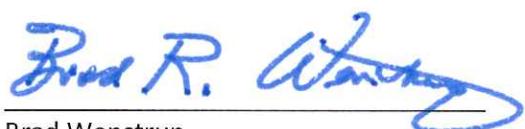
Troy Balderson
Member of Congress



Jim Jordan
Member of Congress



David P. Joyce
Member of Congress



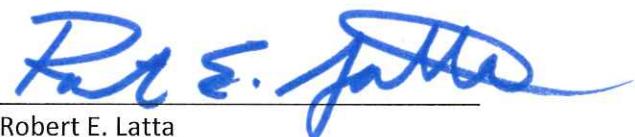
Brad Wenstrup
Member of Congress



Marcia Fudge
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Steve Stivers
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